



# PRESS RELEASE

## House National Security Committee

### Floyd D. Spence, Chairman

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **SPENCE CALLS FOR WITHDRAWAL OF U.S. GROUND TROOPS FROM BOSNIA**

*U.S. Rep. Floyd D. Spence (R-SC), Chairman of the House National Security Committee, today joined Rep. John Kasich, Chairman of the Budget Committee, and a number of other members of the House National Security Committee, in introducing legislation calling for the withdrawal of U.S. ground troops from Bosnia-Herzegovina by the end of the year.*

*Chairman Spence issued the following statement:*

“Sixteen months ago, the Clinton Administration assured Congress and the American people that the commitment of U.S. ground forces to Bosnia would last only one year. Today, our troops remain in Bosnia in support of a policy that still lacks a credible exit strategy. In addition, the costs of our ground participation in Bosnia have escalated from last year’s claim of \$1.5 billion to the latest estimate of almost \$5.5 billion – all costs paid for out of an already underfunded defense budget.

“The time has come to draw the line and force the Administration to face up to the reality that achieving a sustainable peace in Bosnia is unlikely under any realistic time frame. Under these circumstances, the U.S. should begin to work immediately toward a policy that permits the orderly withdrawal of U.S. ground forces from the theater while continuing to provide logistics, intelligence and related support for any follow-on operation.

“The United States has worked tirelessly to force a peaceful resolution of the intractable problems facing the Balkans and should continue to do so. Through our costly intervention on the ground, both Europe and the warring factions in the Balkans have had a window of opportunity to establish the conditions necessary for peace. However, we cannot keep this window open indefinitely, particularly when there are few visible signs that the affected parties are truly moving in the direction of peace.

“It is my hope that this legislation will serve as a catalyst for a long overdue Congressional debate over Bosnia policy and will help us, along with the Administration, to arrive at a decision that ensures that U.S. ground forces are safely withdrawn in a timely manner.

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